sister rebecca: kenyan daktari ya watu, wanyama na mtu ya duka (doctor, veterinarian and shopkeeper)

by cynthia brewer

living in the bush country of kenya, that is home to warring african tribes, particularly a woman living alone for a period of 10 days per month – but not sister rebecca janacek, a petite, faith community, "fifty to sixty natives have received baptism and some of the other sacraments and attended sunday mass, while an additional 100 to 150 also come to each sunday mass to worship with the others. all health services are in the pokot language." as far as in the bush, the new areas, they have not yet established faith communities; they're just trying to lay the groundwork – the pre-catechism," she said.

sister rebecca's ministry is both healing ministry, whereas, the teaching sisters' mobile clinics ministry is in evangelization and teaching the faith. "the sisters take about nine years before asking about the people's faith/celath. they ask, and then, eventually, the native begins to ask who's god is. but in kenya, they're already asking about our faith," she said. "i'm asking the prayers and the teaching sisters to help and come do the evangelizing; the people are nice." sister roca maria of mexico city was instrumental in establishing the incarnate word sisters foundation in nakuru, kenya, in july of 1970. soon after, she invited the incarnate word sisters in victoria and corpus christi to collaborate with them in this project.

"when sister maria asked for volunteers to go to the mission, it was in my heart to go," sister rebecca said. "but i was just an lvn, so in 1983 i went back to school to become a registered nurse. i graduated in 1985."

"because the doctors at my job the hospital knew i would be going to kenya to work in the mission and would not be at work for long, they took me under their care and taught me what the intern doctors were learning."

"to learn even more vital medical skills, she quit her job in august of 1986. during that time, she attended a mission internship program in detroit, mich. with her dad acquiring carpentry skills, as he was a retired building contractor; and worked in car garage with an old family friend to learn mechanical skills. she also has a core group of anonymous donors on which her mission relies. even smaller donations help. "the children from catholic schools help with the money collections," she said, "and they know a lot about our mission.""